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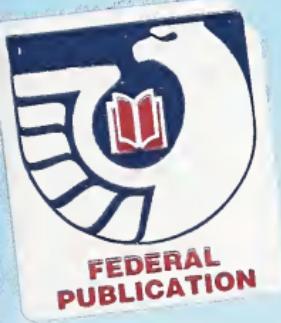
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United States
Department of
Agriculture

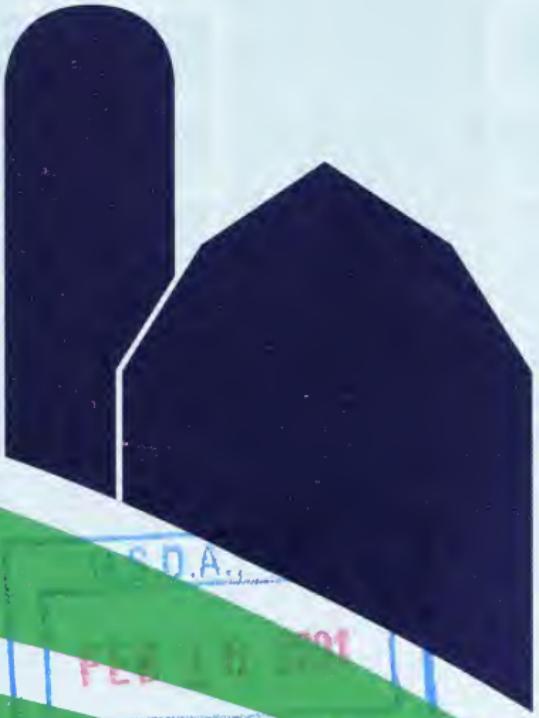


National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service



NASS Confidentiality Pledge

*Our Guarantee
for Safeguarding
Your Privacy*



NASS CONFIDENTIAL

1. Names, addresses, and personal identifiers are never revealed or kept with data.

After data collection, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) transfers the data from the questionnaires into a computer system. The only identifier left with the data is an identification number used by our State offices for quality control purposes. The actual questionnaires are kept in a secure area, then destroyed as prescribed by law. Names, addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, and employee identification numbers are only by NASS State offices. This information is never released to anyone outside the agency.

2. Survey and census data never leave NASS facilities.

Surveyed data collected for the NASS annual statistics program and the 5-year census of agriculture never leave NASS. They are not shared with any organizations or individuals – not even USDA or government agencies. Employees are not allowed to take questionnaires or data listings home. Data security is our top priority.

3. Unauthorized persons working for NASS as employees or sworn partners, or those subject to fines and imprisonment for unauthorized disclosure, can access survey data and only for approved statistical purposes.

Every person working for NASS signs a confidentiality form which states that no survey information will be compromised. There has never been a breach of trust in NASS history. Any offender would receive severe punishment of up to a \$10,000 fine and/or 10 years in prison.

TRANSPARENCY PLEDGE

4. NASS does not conduct surveys or provide data for private, proprietary purposes.

NASS will never conduct a survey for the sole use of any organization. No organization is given ownership of data or an advantage over anyone else. Summarized results are released to everyone free of charge.

5. When NASS collects data for others in a NASS-approved statistical study, farmers and ranchers will always be informed about the cooperating sponsor and participation will always be voluntary.

When NASS agrees to collect data for selected organizations, such as a university or other government agency, NASS will clearly communicate the name of the sponsoring organization and the purpose of the survey. If we feel the reporting burden is too great or the needs of the agricultural community will not be served by the survey, we will not conduct the survey. Although the data are collected by NASS on behalf of the sponsoring organization, all personal identifiers such as name, address, phone number, etc., are removed. Results of the study are published.

6. Summary data from all NASS surveys and censuses are available to everyone, but will never disclose individual reported information.

NASS releases published data to everyone at the same time. Most reports are available on the Internet within minutes of the scheduled release.

Participants in the survey can rest assured that no individual data will be disclosed. For instance, if only one farm produced rice in Pulaski County, Arkansas, then NASS will protect the privacy of that individual farm by not publishing rice data for Pulaski County. Instead, the data would be combined with reports from other counties in the State and published at the aggregate level. No reported data are ever published in a way that would identify an operation.

For all of your agricultural data needs,
the National Agricultural Statistics
Service is here for you. Please visit
our website at:

www.usda.gov/nass/

Customer Service Contacts

Call 1-800-727-9540

or

E-mail nass@nass.usda.gov

Thank you for your cooperation.



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